

Convention 'Bugging' Culprit Named

By Jack Anderson

In a confidential report to Attorney General Ramsey Clark, the FBI has identified the culprit in the famous "bugging" incident at the Democratic convention as NBC.

A hidden mike was found in the hotel room where the platform committee was holding its secret deliberations. The wire was traced to an NBC outlet two floors above.

NBC explained to the FBI that producer Enid Roth had thought the meeting would be open and had ordered not only the mike but also cameras and lights for the room. She learned the meeting was closed, according to NBC, too late to withdraw the mike.

Miss Roth at first denied to the FBI that the mike belonged to NBC, but later changed her story, explaining that she had panicked. The FBI report claimed the mike was discovered under a soft pillow. NBC said it had been taped to a window sill but admitted it had been concealed behind a curtain.

While the mike was in the room, by an interesting coincidence the communications plank happened to come under discussion. This was a matter in which NBC had a vital interest.

A rough draft of the platform had already been written before the committee assembled behind closed doors. On the subject of television, this merely stated: "The mass media need a broad base of economic support consistent with their obligation to serve

the public. To this end, we have supported Educational Television."

TV Violence Deplored

When this was brought up, representatives called for a stronger stand in favor of "a long-range financing plan that will help ensure the vigor and independence of (Educational Television)."

The Humphrey forces also demanded a plank, that was later adopted, declaring: "We deplore the all too frequent practice of exploiting violence in television programming and urge the Federal Communications Commission, through the use of its power to revoke and renew broadcast licenses, to end this practice."

NBC has denied that its concealed mike picked up the confidential discussion of TV violence or any other conversations. An NBC spokesman told this column that the mike was not connected to a recorder or speaker and, therefore, that nothing was overheard.

"Any NBC employee who is caught eavesdropping will be fired," added the spokesman.

Note: The National Association for Better Broadcasting has just released the results of a survey which shows that the television networks are still featuring blood and brutality on the home screen. Frank Orme, NABB executive vice president, has accused the networks of pretending to adhere to a code against excessive violence while they con-

tinue to grow fat on profits milked from TV violence.

Youth Vs. Age

A classic confrontation between youth and age is developing in the House of Representatives over legislative reforms. Kindly old Speaker John McCormack has marked the reforms for a quiet burial. Dynamic, young Rep. Donald Rumsfeld, R-Ill., is determined to dig them up.

McCormack is fronting for the committee chairmen, who hold the real power on Capitol Hill. They are inclined to run their committees like feudal baronies.

Most committee chairmen are past the 65-year mandatory retirement age that the majority of private corporations set for their executives. In the Senate, 10 of the 16 chairmen are past 65; six are over 70. The situation is much the same in the House, where eleven of the 200 chairmen are past 65 and seven are past 70. Yet these are the men who are supposed to stimulate our youth, to get America going.

Most chairmen also come from small towns or rural areas. Thus has Congress entrusted the explosive problems of our great cities to men from another time and place.

The flow of legislation is controlled by Senate Rules Chairman Everett Jordan, 72, of Saxapahaw, N.C., and House Rules Chairman William Colmer, 78, of Pascagoula, Miss. Most bills dealing with the cities are pro-

cessed by Senate Labor and Welfare Chairman Lister Hill, 73, of Montgomery, Ala., and House Education and Labor Chairman Carl Perkins, 55, of Hindman, Ky.

No wonder the people of the ghettos and the youth of the country feel that their cries are ignored and that they must resort to violence to be heard. It will be interesting to see whether Rumsfeld can rally enough young dissidents in the House to overcome the throttlehold of the old chairmen of legislation. To move these old codgers will take an outpouring of mail from home.

LBJ's Melon

Tight-fisted Rep. Otto Passman (D-La.) perhaps in his exuberance over escorting "Miss Watermelon" about Capitol Hill recently, gave away a number of melons shipped in from his Congressional district.

Pointing to an immense pile of choice watermelons, Passman invited Dev O'Neill, photographer for the Democratic National Committee: "Take your pick."

O'Neill walked off with a big one.

The next morning O'Neill got a frantic phone call from a young lady in Passman's office.

"Do you still have that melon?" she asked.

"Yes," replied the photographer.

"Well, please bring it back," she instructed. "You've got the President's melon!"

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